

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, PINR

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WILLIAM BEECHER COLUMN, BOSTON
GLOBE, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, HEADED "U.S. TAKES BRITISH
FILES 'ON LOAN' (THE TROUBLED CIA-2)"

2. IN ORDER TO CONVINCE BRITISH INTELLIGENCE IT CAN HAND
OVER TOP-SECRET DOCUMENTS WITHOUT FEAR OF THEIR BECOMING
PUBLIC, THE UNITED STATES NOW TREATS SUCH MATERIAL AS
"ON LOAN."

3. BY THAT SEMANTIC SLEIGHT OF HAND, SUCH FILES WOULD NOT
BE CONSIDERED THE "PROPERTY" OF THE UNITED STATES AND
THEREFORE WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO SUBPOENA BY CONGRESS OR
THE COURTS.

4. ALSO, WHILE THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WANTED VERY MUCH
TO MOUNT A MAJOR COVERT EFFORT IN SUPPORT OF POLITICAL
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MODERATES IN PORTUGAL, BECAUSE OF WIDESPREAD CRITICISM
OVER A SIMILAR EFFORT IN CHILE NO ACTION WAS TAKEN UNTIL
VERY LATE IN THE GAME.

5. WHAT FINALLY WAS DONE WAS NOT ONLY VERY LATE, BUT VERY

LITTLE. CONTRARY TO PUBLISHED REPORTS SPECULATING ABOUT TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF COVERT AID, THE TOTAL EFFORT TO DATE, ACCORDING TO UNIMPEACHABLE SOURCES, HAS BEEN JUST OVER \$1 MILLION.

6. THESE TWO INCIDENTS ARE IN ONE SENSE CLOSELY RELATED. FOR THEY REPRESENT WAYS THE UNITED STATES IS TRYING TO ADJUST, IN THE AFTERMATH OF MONTHS OF REVELATIONS ABOUT THE CIA ON CAPITAL HILL AND IN THE PRESS, TO THE NEW REALITY OF NERVOUS ALLIES AND A CRITICAL CONGRESS.

7. FOR, WHATEVER REFORMS MAY EVENTUALLY BE DECIDED UPON TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE, THE UNITED STATES CANNOT CALL "TIME" TO MINISTER TO A KEY INJURED PLAYER.

8. THE US-BRITISH INTELLIGENCE CONNECTION HAS BEEN VERY CLOSE SINCE THE DAYS OF WORLD WAR II WHEN THE OSS (OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES), THE PREDECESSOR OF CIA, WAS ESTABLISHED IN PART BECAUSE OF BRITAIN'S DESIRE TO HAVE A SINGLE AGENCY WITH WHICH IT COULD SHARE INFORMATION AND COORDINATE CLandestine OPERATIONS TO MUTUAL ADVANTAGE.

9. THE RELATIONSHIP FLOWERED AS CIA GREW FROM A BAND OF A FEW HUNDRED EX-OSS HANDS IN 1947 TO A 15,000-MAN ESTABLISHMENT, WITH ACCESS TO INFORMATION FROM THE MOST SOPHISTICATED SPY SATELLITES AND OTHER INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING EQUIPMENT IN THE WORLD.

10. BUT THE BRITISH, OF LATE, HAVE BECOME QUITE ALARMED AT THE TREND IN THE UNITED STATES TO SHINE A PUBLIC SPOTLIGHT INTO SOME OF THE MORE SHADOWY CUPBOARDS OF AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE. IN BRITAIN THAT COULD NOT OCCUR BECAUSE OF THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT.

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11. THEY WERE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THEIR SECRET REPORTS AND ANALYSES MIGHT BE PRIED OUT OF THE FILES OF THE CIA BY SUBPOENA FROM A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE OR BY COURT SUIT UNDER THE NEWLY STRENGTHENED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. HIGHLY SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS MIGHT BE COMPROMISED. AND SO THEY HELD BACK A LOT, AND PASSED CERTAIN INFORMATION WITH SO MANY RESTRICTIONS AS TO MAKE THE INFORMATION DIFFICULT TO DISSEMINATE TO ANALYSTS, ACCORDING TO QUALIFIED US SOURCES.

12. THUS AMERICAN OFFICIALS CAME UP WITH THE IMAGINATIVE LEGALISM OF TREATING BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AS PROPERTY, NOT OWNED BUT MERELY ON LOAN TO THE UNITED STATES.

13. BUT OFFICIALS CONCEDE THIS HAS NOT TOTALLY OVERCOME BRITISH APPREHENSION AND THE EARLIER, CLOSE RELATIONSHIP HAS NOT BEEN FULLY RESTORED.

14. IN THE CASE OF PORTUGAL, OFFICIALS SAY THAT SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER WAS PARTICULARLY WORRIED THAT UNLESS LISBON'S DRIFT TOWARD INCLUDING COMMUNISTS IN TOP GOVERNMENT POSTS COULD BE REVERSED, IT MIGHT WELL GIVE AN AURA OF RESPECTABILITY TO COALITION GOVERNMENTS WITH COMMUNIST MEMBERS THAT MIGHT BE REPEATED IN ITALY AND ELECTIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE.

15. IF SUCH A TREND DEVELOPED, HE FELT, THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED. FOR NATO, AN ALLIANCE DESIGNED TO STAND AGAINST SOVIET POLITICAL AND MILITARY PRESSURE, COULD NOT FUNCTION WITHOUT EXCHANGING GREAT QUANTITIES OF CLASSIFIED FACTS AND PLANS. AND WITH COMMUNISTS SITTING IN ITS INNER COUNCILS, SUCH INFORMATION COULD NOT BE KEPT FROM MOSCOW, IN HIS VIEW.

16. KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES SAY WILLIAM E. COLBY, CIA DIRECTOR, IN SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER STOUTLY RESISTED PRESSURES TO MOUNT A COVERT POLITICAL-ACTION PROGRAM IN

PORTUGAL, ARGUING THAT WORD WOULD GET OUT AND CONGRESS AND THE PRESS WOULD HAVE A FIT OVER INTERFERENCE IN THE INTER-UNCLASSIFIED

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NAL AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER NATION, SIMILAR TO THE REACTION TO REVELATIONS OF CIA ACTIVITIES IN CHILE.

17. AS LATE AS JULY, A NUMBER OF OTHER OFFICIALS WERE BACKING COLBY IN THE ARGUMENT THAT AMERICAN HANDS WERE TIED IN PORTUGAL BY THE HOSTILE ATMOSPHERE IN CONGRESS. INSTEAD, THEY INSISTED THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE TO SIT BACK AND DEPEND ON A NUMBER OF WEST EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES LED BY THOSE IN WEST GERMANY AND SWEDEN, TO HELP THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN PORTUGAL.

18. MEANWHILE, WHILE NO ONE KNEW THE HARD NUMBERS, REPORTS WERE CIRCULATING THROUGH THE BUREAUCRACY THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS SPENDING ABOUT \$50 MILLION IN PORTUGAL.

19. IN EARLY AUGUST, PRESIDENT FORD COMPLAINED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL IMPOSSIBILITY OF CIA INVOLVEMENT IN PORTUGAL BECAUSE OF THE NEGATIVE CLIMATE ON CAPITOL HILL. BUT A MONTH LATER, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, THE PRESIDENT HINTED OF SOME INVOLVEMENT WHEN HE DECLARED: "I DON'T THINK THE SITUATION (IN PORTUGAL) REQUIRED US TO HAVE A

MAJOR CIA INVOLVEMENT, WHICH WE HAVE NOT HAD."

20. SOURCES SAY THAT BETWEEN THESE TWO STATEMENTS BY FORD, THE ADMINISTRATION DISCUSSED THE DANGER OF TRENDS IN PORTUGAL WITH SOME KEY CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND A SMALL-SCALE CIA EFFORT WAS APPROVED AND LAUNCHED.

21. OBSERVERS IN AND OUT OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY BELIEVE THE CIA HAS BEEN GIVEN A BUM RAP OVER COVERT ACTION IN PLACES LIKE CHILE AND LAOS. AS IN THE CASE OF PORTUGAL, THEY POINT OUT, THE DECISION TO GO IN AND THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE EFFORT, WERE DECIDED UPON BY THE PRESIDENT AND SUPERVISED BY HIS ADVISERS.

22. RAY S. CLINE, WHO CAPPED A 20-YEAR CAREER WITH CIA BY SERVING FROM 1962 TO 1966, AS ITS DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SUBSEQUENTLY HEADED THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S INTELLIGENCE BRANCH FROM 1969 TO 1973, SAID IN AN INTERVIEW UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT THE LAOS OPERATION STARTED AS A STANDARD CLANDESTINE INTELLIGENCE MISSION TO GATHER INFORMATION ON NORTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY MOVEMENTS ALONG THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL.

23. BUT A SERIES OF WHITE HOUSE DECISIONS, STARTING IN THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION, TURNED THE EFFORT FROM THAT OF A SMALL NUMBER OF MEO TRIBESMEN COLLECTING TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE INTO A COVERT, UNDECLARED WAR, RUN IN THE FIELD BY A SUCCESSION OF AMERICAN AMBASSADORS IN VIENTIANE.

24. A SENIOR CONGRESSIONAL SOURCE AGREES. BOTH NORTH VIETNAM AND THE UNITED STATES ACTED OUT A CHARADE IN WHICH NEITHER ADMITTED ITS PARTICIPATION IN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN LAOS. IN THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES, HE SAYS, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN FORCED BY THE LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT TO PULL OUT IF IT ADMITTED ITS ROLE PUBLICLY, THEREBY INCREASING THE JEOPARDY TO AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

25. "IT GREW TO A \$20 MILLION TO \$30 MILLION A YEAR OPERATION, FUNDED OUT OF THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET," THE CONGRESSIONAL SOURCE SAID. "BUT IT WAS NOT AN ASSIGNMENT THE CIA PARTICULARLY RELISHED, AND IT CERTAINLY CANNOT BE BLAMED IN THAT INSTANCE FOR RUNNING AMOK."

26. IN THE CASE OF CHILE, CLINE SAYS, "KISSINGER PUSHED THE CIA IN, PRESUMABLY IN BEHALF OF NIXON." THE OPERATION, HE SAID, WAS RUN FROM THE WHITE HOUSE.

27. BUT HE AND OTHERS DO BLAME THE CIA FOR KNUCKLING UNDER TO PRESSURES FROM PRESIDENTS JOHNSON AND NIXON TO INFILTRATE

AND REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF ANTIWAR GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES.

28. CLINE MAKES THIS DISTINCTION: IF CIA HAD PENETRATED DOMESTIC GROUPS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A COVER TO SEND AGENTS ABROAD ON CLANDENSTINE MISSIONS, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN PERMISSIBLE, IN HIS VIEW. BUT CIA PROVIDED EXTENSIVE REPORTS TO THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE FBI ON THE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES OF SUCH DOMESTIC GROUPS, AND THAT CLEARLY WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPROPER.

29. "I CAN ONLY BLAME HELMS FOR NOT DIGGING IN HIS HEELS HARDER," CLINE SAYS, REFERRING TO RICHARD HELMS, WHO AT THE TIME HEADED CIA AND NOW IS AMBASSADOR TO IRAN. MANY OTHERS VOICED THE SAME SENTIMENT, SAYING THAT HELMS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO SAY NO TO THE WHITE HOUSE, BUT SUGGESTING THAT HE SAW THAT THE AGENCY "DRAGGED ITS HEELS" AND DID THE LEAST POSSIBLE IN QUESTIONABLE OPERATIONS.

30. A NUMBER OF SPECIALISTS BELIEVE RECENT REVELATIONS MAY BE USEFUL IN OPENING THE WAY TO NEEDED REFORM OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, BUT THEY ARGUE THAT THE FOCUS ON COVERT OPERATIONS WHICH REPRESENT ONLY ABOUT TWO PERCENT OF INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY, IS MISSING THE FOREST FOR THE TREES.

31. IN THEIR VIEW, THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS ARE:
1) A PAUCITY OF CONSISTENTLY WELL THOUGHT-OUT, WELL ARTICULATED AND TIMELY INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS, AND 2) A PENCHANT FOR OVERSECRECY OVER THE LAST SIX YEARS WHICH WITHHOLDS FROM TOP INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS INFORMATION, FOR INSTANCE, ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. SUCH INFORMATION WOULD ENABLE THE ANALYSTS TO BETTER KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN STUDYING THE REAMS OF DATA CULLED FROM RECONNAISSANCE SATELLITES, AGENT REPORTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF SOVIET AND CHINESE BROADCASTS AND NEWSPAPERS.

32. SAYS ONE OFFICIAL OF THE POOR QUALITY, OVERALL, OF ANALYSIS FROM CIA AND DIA (DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY):
"THEY KNOW THE SINGLE STONES OF THE MOSAIC. THEY KNOW THE COLOR AND SHAPE AND SIZE OF MANY OF THEM. BUT THEY CAN'T PUT THE MOSAIC TOGETHER CONSISTENTLY."

33. TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ANALYSIS REQUIRES THE RECRUITMENT OF BETTER ANALYSTS, PROVISION OF WELL THOUGHT-OUT PROGRAMS OF SPECIALIZED ADVANCED EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND INCENTIVES TO GET OUT ON A LIMB AND WARN OF IMPENDING CRISES WHEN FACTS AND INTUITION WARRANT, THE

EXPERTS AGREE.

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34. BUT THEY FEEL THE PRESENT CLIMATE MAKES IT ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT MANY OF THE KIND OF YOUNG PEOPLE NECESSARY FOR AN UPGRADING EFFORT.

35. ON THE MATTER OF OVER-SECRECY, CLINE RECENTLY TOLD THE PIKE COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE: "IN ALL MY YEARS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AS CHIEF OF INTELLIGENCE, I NEVER SAW ANY RECORD OF ANY OF THE MANY CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS AND SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIALS. IF THESE HAD BEEN AVAILABLE FOR SYSTEMATIC STUDY BY SOVIET EXPERTS, SOME OF THE RATHER NAIVE STEPS TAKEN IN PRESIDENTIAL-LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVOIDED."

36. AND PENTAGON SOURCES SAY THE DECISION TO INVADE CAMBODIA IN 1970 WAS SO CLOSELY HELD BY THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION THAT EVEN THE THEN DIA DIRECTOR, LT. GEN. DONALD BENNETT, WAS IN THE DARK. ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT, ON THE MORNING OF THE INVASION BENNETT WAS ASKED HOW THE RUSSIANS AND CHINESE WERE REACTING?

37. "IF YOU'D HAVE TOLD ME A FEW DAYS AGO, I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN SOME SPECIAL ASSETS INTO PLACE TO BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU A DECENT ANSWER," HE IS REPORTED TO HAVE SNAPPED.

38. THE POINT, OF COURSE, IS THAT IF A HANDFUL OF TOP OFFICIALS ARE SO WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF LEAKS THAT THEY DON'T EVEN CONFIDE IN THE HEADS OF STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENT INTELLIGENCE, THIS SEVERELY CONSTRAINS THE ABILITY OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY TO SERVE THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS EFFECTIVELY.

39. NEXT: DIFFERENT VIEWS ON HOW THE CIA SHOULD BE REFORMED. (END TEXT) INGERSOLL

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